Numb. CXLVI.

The GUARDIAN.

Primus hominum leonem manu tractare auſus, & oſtendere manſuefactum, Hanno è clariſſimis Pænorum traditur. Plin.

Friday, Auguſt 28. 1713.

THE Generality of my Readers, I find, are ſo well pleaſed with the Story of the Lion, in my Paper of the 20th Inſtant, and with my Friend's Deſign of compiling a Hiſtory of that noble Species of Animals; that a great many Ingenious Perſons have promiſed me their Aſſiſtance to bring in Materials for the Work, from all the Store-houſes of Ancient and Modern Learning, as well as from Oral Tradition. For a farther Encouragement of the Undertaking, a conſiderable number of *Virtuoſi* have offered, when my Collections ſhall ſwell into a reaſonable Bulk, to contribute very handſomly, by way of Subſcription, towards the Printing of them in *Folio*, on a large Royal Paper, curiouſly adorned with Variety of Foreſts, Deſarts, Rocks and Caverns, and Lyons of all Sorts and Sizes upon Copper Plates by the beſt Hands. A rich old Batchelor of *Lyon's-Inn*, (who is Zealous for the Honour of the Place in which he was Educated) ſends me Word, I may depend upon a Hundred Pounds from him towards the Embelliſhing of the Work; aſſuring me, at the ſame time, that he will ſet his Clerk to ſearch the Records, and enquire into the Antiquities of that Houſe, that there may be no Stone left unturned to make the Book compleat. Conſidering the Volumes that have been writ upon *Inſects* and *Reptiles*, and the vaſt Expence and Pains ſome Philoſophers have been at to diſcover, by the help of Glaſſes, their minute imperceptible Qualities and Perfections; it will not, I hope, be thought unreaſonable, if the Lion (whoſe Majeſtick Form lies open to the naked Eye) ſhould take up a firſt-rate *Folio*.

A worthy Merchant, and a Friend of mine, ſends me the following Letter, to be inſerted in my Commentaries upon Lions.

SIR,

‘SInce one of your Correſpondents has, of late, entertained the Publick with a very remarkable and ancient Piece of Hiſtory, in Honour of the Grandees of the Foreſt; and ſince it is probable you may in time collect a great many curious Records and amazing Circumſtances, which may contribute to make theſe Animals reſpected over the Face of the whole Earth; I am not a little ambitious to have the Glory of contributing ſomewhat to ſo generous an

(Price Two Pence.)

an Undertaking. If you throw your Work into the Form of a Chronicle, I am in hopes I may furnish out a Page in it towards the latter End of the Volume, by a Narration of a modern Date, which I had in the Year 1700, from the Gentleman to whom it happened.

‘About ſixty Years ago, when the Plague raged at *Naples*, Sir *George Davis* (Conſul there for the *Engliſh* Nation) retired to *Florence*. It happened one Day, he went out of Curioſity to ſee the *Great Duke*'s Lions. At the farther End, in one of the Dens, lay a Lion, which the Keepers in three Years time could not tame, with all the Art and gentle Uſage imaginable. Sir *George* no ſooner appeared at the Grates of the Den, but the Lion ran to him with all the Marks of Joy and Tranſport, he was capable of expreſſing: He reared himſelf up and licked his Hand, which this Gentleman put in through the Grates. The Keeper affrighted, took him by the Arm and pulled him away, begging him not to hazard his Life, by going ſo near the fierceſt Creature of that Kind, that ever entered thoſe Dens. However, nothing would ſatisfie Sir *George*, notwithſtanding all that could be ſaid to diſſuade him, but he muſt go into the Den to him. The very Inſtant he entered, the Lion threw his Paws upon his Shoulders, and licked his Face, and ran to and fro in the Den, fawning, and full of Joy, like a Dog at the Sight of his Maſter. After ſeveral Embraces and Salutations exchanged on both Sides, they parted very good Friends. The Rumour of this Interview between the Lion and the Stranger rung immediately through the whole City, and Sir *George* was very near paſſing for a Saint among the People. The *Great Duke*, when he heard of it, ſent for Sir *George*, who waited upon his Highneſs to the Den, and, to ſatisfie his Curioſity, gave him the following Account of what ſeemed ſo ſtrange to the Duke and his Followers.

‘A Captain of a Ship from *Barbary* gave me this Lion when he was a young Whelp. I brought him up tame; but when I thought him too large to be ſuffered to run about the Houſe, I built a Den for him in my Court-yard; from that time he was never permitted to go looſe, except when I brought him within Doors to ſhew him to my Friends. When he was five Years old, in his Gameſome Tricks, he did ſome Miſchief by Pawing and Playing with People: Having griped a Man one Day a little too hard, I ordered him to be ſhot, for fear of incurring the Guilt of what might happen; upon this a Friend, who was then at Dinner with me, begged him: How he came here I know not.

‘Here Sir *George Davis* ended; and thereupon the Duke of *Tuſcany* aſſured him, that he had the Lion from that very Friend of his.

I am,

SIR,

Your moſt Obedient Servant,

and conſtant Reader, &c.

This Paper is to be had of Mr. Yemes *under the* Thatch'd-houſe *Tavern in St.* James's-ſtreet; *Mrs.* Bond *at* Charing-croſs; *Mrs.* Bolter *and Mrs.* Dodd *near the* Temple-gate; *and Mr.* Round *in* Exchange-Ally.

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